

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 8367

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, YO, UR, US
SUBJECT: JURE BILIC ON YUGOSLAV-SOVIET AND YUGOSLAV-U.S.
RELATIONS

REF: BELGRADE 7885

1. BREWUNEV VISIT--WEST GERMAN CORRESPONDENT OLAF
IHLAU OF "SUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG" HAS TOLD EMBOFFS ABOUT TWO-
HOUR INTERVIEW RECENTLY GRANTED BY LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS
SECRETARY JURE BILIC. TAKING CURRENT LINE ON BREZHNEV
VISIT, BILIC CONFIRMED ACCURACY OF UPI STORY, WHICH WAS
DELIBERATELY LEAKED BY YUGOSLAVS AND EMPHASIZED REJECTION
OF SOVIET DEMANDS. BILIC ASSURED CORRESPONDENT THAT
YUGOSLAVIA WILL NOT CHANGE ITS LAW GOVERNING ACCESS OF
FOREIGN NAVAL VESSELS TO ADRIATIC PORTS. (ANSWER BEGS
THE QUESTION OF WHETHER SOVIETS WILL BE GRANTED INCREASED
ACCESS BECAUSE EXISTING LAW PERMITS CONSIDERABLE FLEX-
IBILITY.) SAME CORRESPONDENT HAS RECENTLY WRITTEN THAT
SHIP LAW WOULD BE REVISED TO ALLOW TEN SHIPS PER PORT.
FSFA DIRECTOR FOR SOVIET AFFAIRS DIMCEVSKI TOLD JAPANESE
COUNSELOR DECEMBER 22 THAT GOY HAS NO INTENTION TO
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CHANGE SHIP LAW NOW BUT THAT HE COULD NOT TELL WHAT WOULD
HAPPEN IN 2-3 YEARS.

2. NIXON--JOURNALIST ASKED BILIC WHY HE HAD
CHARGED IN A RECENT INTERVIEW THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAD
ENCOURAGED CROATION NATIONALISM DURING 1970 VISIT TO

ZAGREB (REFTEL. BILIC REPLIED THAT THE UNITED STATES AT THAT TIME WAS INVESTING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN CROATIA AND SLOVENIA AND THAT YUGOSLAVS WERE VERY SENSITIVE ABOUT U.S. INTENTIONS. IN ADDITION, BILIC SAID HE MENTIONED NIXON BECAUSE HE WAS UPSET AT CARTER'S CAMPAIGN DEBATE STATEMENT ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA. BILIC SAID HE WANTED THE U.S. TO REALIZE THAT IT CANNOT PLAY WITH THE FATE OF OTHER PEOPLE. BILIC SAID THAT HE PROBABLY WOULD NOT HAVE SAID WITH HE DID IF HE HAD BEEN A "STATESMAN."

3. COMINFORMIST--BILIC CONFIRMED THAT COMINFORMIST EMIGRE LEADER MILETA PEROVIC IS IN SOFIA.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS--BILIC JUSTIFIED THE IMPRISONMENT OF WRITER MIHAJLO MIHAJLOV BY SAYING THAT HE HAD BROKEN YUGOSLAV LAW AND MUST BE PUNISHED. AT THE SAME TIME BILIC SAID THAT MILOVAN DJILAS, PURGED PARTY LEADER AND DISSIDENT WRITER, COULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY IF HE WISHED. (ANOTHER JOURNALIST SAID THAT DJILAS KNOWS HE COULD HAVE A PASSPORT BUT IS TOO PROUD TO APPLY FOR ONE.)

5. NEW LINE--THE POLISH COUNSELOR, IN CONVERSATION WITH POL COUNS, SUGGESTED THREE REASONS WHY THE YUGOSLAV LINE ABOUT THE BREZHNEV VISIT HAS HARDENED, AFTER INITIAL REPORTS OF A SUCCESSFUL AND FRIENDLY MEETING. HE SAID: (1) THE YUGOSLAVS WANT TO IMPRESS THE NEW UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION WITH THEIR INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SOVIET UNION; (2) THERE IS A STRUGGLE GOING ON BETWEEN FACTIONS IN THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS (HE DECLINED TO BE MORE SPECIFIC); (3) TITO WAS THE FIRST NON-ALIGNED LEADER TO CONFIDENTIAL

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SEE BREZHNEV AFTER COLOMBO AND HE WANTS TO REAFFIRM HIS NON-ALIGNED CREDENTIALS AND LEADERSHIP.

6. PRESS--THE YUGOSLAV PRESS HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY WASPISH TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION OF LATE. TITO SINGLED OUT THE BULGARIANS (SOVIET SURROGATES) FOR CRITICISM IN HIS ARMY DAY SPEECH, THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF TH CROATIAN LC DRAGOSAVAC HAS BEEN STATING THE YUGOSLAV VIEW OF PROLETARIAT INTERNATIONALISM IN THE PARTY WEEKLY "KOMUNIST", AND SEVERAL ARTICLES HAVE CRITICIZED THE TREATMENT OF THE 1948 SOVIET-YUGOSLAV SPLIT IN THE NEWLY ISSUED HISTORY OF THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY. SILBERMAN

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